of zoology and botany (and even of genetics) is painfully inadequate. This book will thus be quite indispensable to all teachers of biology, and as its price is moderate, it can also be warmly recommended to students, particularly of genetics.

Basing the description on a single species has the drawback that there is probably no organism in which all phases are equally clear. The weak point of *Lilium regale* is the prophase of the first meiotic division. Perhaps the value of the book could be still further enhanced if in a later edition the treatment of the first meiotic prophase could be supplemented by a few photographs from a different species (perhaps a grasshopper).

H. GRÜNEBERG

Robinson, Roy. *Genetic Studies of the Rabbit.* The Hague, 1958. Martinus Nijhoff. Reprinted from *Bibliographia Genetica*, **17**, pp. 2 + 229-558. Price 36 guilders.

IN THE EARLY YEARS of this century, all four laboratory rodents, rabbit, guinea-pig, rat and mouse provided ample material to test the validity of the re-discovered Mendelian laws, and subsequently they served for studies in comparative genetics. They were later joined by the American deer-mouse, *Peromyscus*, which is not yet a tame animal, and very recently by the golden hamster which is much more docile. However, progress with these six species has been very unequal, and the mouse on account of its small size and consequent cheapness is now by far the best-known object of mammalian genetics. With some regret, it must be admitted that genetic research in guinea-pig and rat has virtually come to a standstill, and that the genetics of the rabbit is now actively studied in no more than two or three laboratories. We hope that this setback is only temporary, and that the interest in the genetics of these animals will one day revive. At any rate, the moment appears opportune to take stock of the situation and to bring together all the published information in the form of a monograph.

The author of that monograph, Mr. Roy Robinson, is not a professional scientist, but has come to take an interest in the subject from the Rabbit Fancy. Mr. Robinson has undertaken a very difficult task as a labour of love and without the facilities which full-time employment in an academic department affords. Moreover, he has filled a gap which, it seems, would otherwise have persisted for some time to come. Under these circumstances, the professional geneticists may well be grateful to Mr. Robinson for his devoted labours. They will, I feel sure, be inclined to overlook certain obvious shortcomings (most of which are not of a very serious nature) and set against them the positive usefulness of the work; one of the points where Mr. Robinson scores over most professional geneticists is his intimate knowledge of the breeds of the Fancy.

H. GRÜNEBERG

HEREDITY

Stowe, Leland, *Crusoe of Lonesome Lake.* New York, 1957. Random House. Pp. xviii + 234. Price $3.50.

TWO YEARS OR SO AGO, Leland Stowe, internationally known journalist and Pullitzer prize-winner, visited the Ralph Edwards homestead on Lonesome Lake, east of the Bella Coola Valley in British Columbia, to get a first-hand picture of this remarkable family and their achievement. It is doubtful indeed if Stowe realized that he was making a contribution to the nature-nurture discussion; but implications for science are inherent throughout his book. It is a biographical and not a scientific study, and is based not on statistically treated numbers but on one family; yet it shows clearly that, given good, sound hereditary stock and strong enough motivation, a severely deprived educational environment is not enough to hold mental development down, even slightly. It bears out this reviewer's personal observation and expectation that the pioneers of the Bella Coola (or for that matter any other self-selected outpost of civilization) can produce even superior children! It refutes any suggestion that environment, no matter how severely deprived culturally, will necessarily inhibit normal mental development, provided good native capacity and motivation are there to begin with.

In previous research studies of mental development of children reared in isolated environments —such as that first reported by Gordon in England for children whose school attendance was highly restricted because of their having to